

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the preceding amendments and following remarks, is respectfully requested. Claims 1, 4-7, 14, 16-18 and 20-21 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 14 and 18 are amended, and claims 8, 10-12, 22-24, and 26-27 are cancelled. Claims 1, 14, and 18 are the independent claims.

Allowed Claims

Applicants note with appreciation that claims 1 and 4-7 are allowed.

Examiner Interview

Applicants thank the Examiner for granting the interview conducted on October 28, 2009. During the interview, Applicants discussed the rejection to claims 8, 10-12, 14, 17-18, and 21-24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Zicker (U.S. Patent No. 6,038,437), as well as possible claim amendments to overcome the Zicker reference. Applicants have amended independent claims 14 and 18 as discussed during the interview to overcome the Zicker reference. For instance, Applicants have amended independent claims 14 and 18 to include the features of allowed claim 1. In response, the Examiner agreed that these amendments overcome the Zicker reference, and would be entered into the record. Also, the Examiner stated that if anything should prevent this application from proceeding to allowance, the Examiner would call Applicants' representatives, Jared Scholz, at 703-668-8006 before a next USPTO communication. As such, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to issue a Notice of Allowance in the next USPTO communication.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected claims 8, 10-12, 14, 17-18, and 21-24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Zicker (U.S. Patent No. 6,038,437). As stated above, Applicants have amended independent claims 14 and 18 to include features similar to allowed claim 1, thereby overcoming the Zicker reference. As such, Applicants respectfully request this rejection be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above remarks and amendments, the Applicant respectfully submits that each of the pending objections and rejections has been addressed and overcome, placing the present application in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

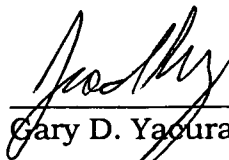
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Gary D. Yacura, at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

HARNESS, DICKEY, & PIERCE, P.L.C.

By



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